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ABSTRACT

This brief review of German programs for undergraduate language majors in North Carolina summarizes findings in four charts. They include: (1) high schools offering German during 1969-70, (2) colleges offering only elementary and intermediate German, including community colleges, (3) curriculums of colleges not offering a major in German, and (4) curriculums of colleges offering a major in German. Criticism of undergraduate programs is directed toward teaching methodology which does not take into account the findings of research in modern linguistics and the implementation of individualized instructional programs. (RL)

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Towards a Reasonable Appraisal of German Curricula

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One sometimes hears the complaint from disillusioned colleagues or disgruntled students that German studies are outdated and offer nothing more relevant than a foundering discipline which discourages many prospective candidates from choosing German as a major. While complaints of this nature often betray the somewhat belated discovery that a liberal arts education of any type is not a learned skill and therefore has no intrinsic value on the market of practicality, there may nevertheless be some justification for criticism with regard to the German curriculum as generally offered on the undergraduate level.

My interest in making a study of German curricula within the state of North Carolina arose partly from (1) my experience in revising the curriculum at East Carolina University in the fall of 1968, (2) the present restructuring of higher education in North Carolina, where German studies on the graduate level will most certainly be affected, and (3) the need to make some minor changes in the curriculum at Pfeiffer College. The leg work for this study consisted of compiling statistics and charting graphs according to the most recent catalogues of colleges and universities in North Carolina. Older catalogues had to be used when current editions were either still at press or simply not available. Since no North Carolina College or University has an undergraduate major in German Civilization and the practical exclusion of almost all literature,¹ any evaluation of an undergraduate curriculum will (for the purposes of the article) be made in accordance with the traditional and generally accepted view that German is primarily a discipline of the humanities, in which the social and behavioral sciences are only incidentally or indirectly concerned.

According to the *College Blue Book* (1969-1970) there are 118 colleges in North Carolina. This figure includes private and public colleges and universities, community colleges as well as Bible colleges and academies. As far as I can ascertain, none of the Bible colleges and academies teach German. Accompanying this article are charts demonstrating the extent of German studies within this state. Charts No. 1 and No. 2 are self-explanatory. For Charts No. 3 and No. 4, see legend, bottom of Chart No. 3.

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In Chart No. 3, which demonstrates curricula of colleges not offering a major in German, most of the programs provide a German minor or else support other disciplines in some way. However, as regards Appalachian State University, one might well applaud the university's offering of three courses in conversation (with some composition)—but not to the exclusion of civilization and survey courses. On the other hand, a curriculum such as the one offered by Elon College, Chart No. 3, while well equipped in the introduction, civilization, and survey courses, might possibly profit from a combination course such as advanced grammar and composition, or composition and conversation, or conversation alone, to balance out its support program.

Probably the greatest *lacuna* as far as German studies in North Carolina is concerned shows up to be geographical rather than specifically academic in nature. While the Raleigh secondary schools have done their part admirably by providing the capital city with German on the elementary and intermediate levels, the local colleges have apparently been unable to present any acceptable major program in German, though Shaw University hopes to institute such in the near future. Since a major at each of the Raleigh colleges would not be economically feasible or even desirable from an academic point of view, yet under the college cooperative system, each of the schools or universities—State, Meredith, St. Augustine's, St. Mary's, Shaw, Peace (at present no German reported)—should theoretically be able and willing to offer an acceptable major program at present and on demand. This particular situation in the capital city is one instance where both private and state-supported colleges and universities could greatly benefit each other by utilizing more extensively the cooperative programs already in effect, whereby resource persons, facilities, and faculties are shared at no financial loss to member units. (One additional comment apropos of the curriculum at N.C. State: while technical German is quite appropriately provided at the graduate level, students could well profit from such a practical offering at the undergraduate level.)

Chart No. 4 shows the fifteen North Carolina colleges offering a major in German. All of them offer two courses in elementary German and two courses in intermediate German (or the equivalent).

The German program offered by Duke University immediately stands out as the most all-inclusive. One course, Applied Linguistics, is described in the graduate catalogue as including phonetics, but the same course in the undergraduate catalogue has no mention of

Chart no. 1

High Schools Offering German '69-'70.
(Statistics from State Board of
Education, March 18, 1971)

German

4	3	2	1	
X	X	X	X	Smith (Fayetteville)
X	X	X	X	Ross (Fayetteville)
X	X	X	X	Sanford (Fayetteville)
X	X	X	X	Lexington (Lexington)
X	X	X	X	Durham (Durham City)
X	X	X	X	Hillside (Durham City)
X	X	X	X	Wt. Tabor (Forsyth)
X	X	X	X	Reynolds (Forsyth)
X	X	X	X	Caringer (Mecklenburg)
X	X	X	X	Independence (Mecklenburg)
X	X	X	X	Myers Park (Mecklenburg)
X	X	X	X	Hoggard (New Hanover)
X	X	X	X	New Hanover (New Hanover)
X	X	X	X	Carnage (Raleigh)
X	X	X	X	Sanderson (Raleigh)
X	X	X	X	Ligon (Raleigh)
X	X	X	X	Martin (Raleigh)
X	X	X	X	Broughton (Raleigh)
X	X	X	X	Enloe (Raleigh)
X	X	X	X	Wayne (Wayne)
X	X	X	X	Topsail (Topsail)
X	X	X	X	St. Mary's Jr. Coll. (Raleigh)

* Church supported

Chart no.

2a
Colleges Offering Elementary
and Intermediate German only

Belmont Abbey	Meredith
Gardner-Webb	Montreat-Anderson
High Point	NCSD-Fort Bragg
Johnson C. Smith	St. Augustine
Leas-McRae	St. Mary's
Louisburg	Wingate
Winston-Salem State University	

Chart no. 3

Curricula of Colleges not Offering a Major in German

A & W	Bennett	Brevard	Campbell	Dion	Greensboro	Guliford	Livingstone	Methodist	NC State U	NC Wesleyan	Pembroke U	Shaw	St. Andrews	UNC-Wilmington
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	Elementary Intermediate	Introductory Readings	German Culture Civilization	Survey of Lit.	Advanced Gram.	Composition	Conversation	20th C. Prose	20th C. Drama	Rapid Reading of Modern Germ.	German Lit. in Translation
A & W	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bennett	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Brevard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Campbell	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dion	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Greensboro	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Guliford	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Livingstone	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Methodist	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NC State U	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NC Wesleyan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pembroke U	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shaw	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
St. Andrews	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
UNC-Wilmington	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Chart no. 2b

Community Colleges Offering German *
Elem. Int. Adv.
Central Piedmont X X X
Davidson X X X
Rockingham X X X
* Courtesy Department of Community
Colleges, N.C. State Board of
Education, July 21, 1971.

Footnotes for Chart no. 3
1. Also offers 2 courses in in-
tensive Grammar.
2. 3 courses in elem. and interm.
conversational German.
3. Includes phonetics.
4. Includes comparative grammar.
5. Includes civilization.

Curricula of Colleges Offering a Major in German

- Elementary & Intermediate
- Introductory Readings
- German Culture & Civilization
- Survey of Lit. to Pres. 19th & 20th C.
- Advanced Gram.
- Composition
- Conversation
- 20th C. Prose
- 20th C. Drama
- 19th C. Prose
- 19th C. Drama
- Romanticism
- Class. Period
- Goethe
- Schiller
- 18th C. Lit.
- Baroque
- Poetry
- Novel
- Novelle
- Phonetics
- History of Lang.
- Linguistics
- Intensive Gram.
- Rapid Reading or techn. vern.
- Methods for Teaching Vern.
- German Lit. in English

[illegible]

Legend for Charts 3 and 4

One course in sub. it listed

One course
vertically

vertically
Two courses in sequence, or courses
covering same subject with different
content material.

content material.
One course integrating subjects listed vertically.

ed vertically.
Elementary and Intermediate German,
: 4 courses or the e ivalent.

Footnotes for Chart 4

1. Half course.

1. Half course.
2. 2 courses: Kleist, Hebbel, Grillparzer.

3. Apparently includes grammar and phonetics.

and phonetics.

A. From ca. 1700 to present.

4. FROM CH. 100 TO PRESENT.
5. Also includes phonetics.

6. Includes Kulturschichte.
7. From 1770 to present.

8. 20th Century.

9. Novel.

9. NOVEL.
0. To 1750.

To 1750.
One course:

1. One course:
Faust as con-
versational
topic.

phonetics, some aspect of which is required for teacher certification in North Carolina.² This oversight may have been corrected in the 1971-72 catalogue. According to its 1970 catalogue, the Department of Germanic Languages and Literature at UNC-Chapel Hill no longer offers phonetics. As one who benefited greatly by such a course, I can only hope that omitting this important aspect of language learning is the result of a clerical error.

While the major emphasis in Chapel Hill is naturally on graduate studies, it does seem appropriate that some opportunity should be provided for undergraduate German majors to experience something of German(ic) literature older than 1700, even if in modern German (or English) translation. If Comparative Literature 137 cannot fill this need, perhaps some additional course could be introduced to show undergraduate students what Germanics is all about.

Several colleges and universities have an intensive grammar course on the elementary level, *e.g.*, UNC-Chapel Hill, at long last. Such a course provides the better students the opportunity for fulfilling the foreign language requirement (if still in effect) ahead of schedule. More importantly, it affords the possibility for students who have had no previous German to select a German major without penalty of time forfeiture. Naturally, careful screening of students is necessary.

In an attempt to make curricula as flexible as possible, or where there is little demand, and in order to offer the possibility of a more complete schedule, many departments have initiated courses in special studies or topics to be completed on an individual basis under supervision. (*E.g.*, Pfeiffer, where independent study must fulfill the last course requirement for a German major. One student is presently studying literature of the Baroque. This was a topic of her own choosing.) Other departments, not offering a major, like *vi* provide some possibility for additional study in German. Courses of this nature are usually to be found under a listing such as "special studies," "special topics," "independent studies," "seminars," *et al.* Some departments also give opportunity for improving one's spoken German through such offerings as a German table, special courses in conversation, overseas study and Junior Year Abroad programs. Other departments have supplemented the "normal" German curricula with specific courses making use of resource persons or facilities available. A list of these supplements, unique in that they are not offered by more than one or two schools, is as follows:

Davidson: Senior thesis, MHG Literature, Renaissance and Reformation, Studies in German Literature or Linguistics (two courses).

Duke: MHG Literature and Language, a course in Heine, Renaissance and Reformation Literature, Preceptorials.³

ECU: Lab theory and techniques.

WCU: German Drama—dialogue discussions of representative German dramas.

UNC-Charlotte: Twentieth Century Germany as reflected in literature; *Hörspiel*; Senior Colloquium.

UNC-Greensboro: International House, readings for seniors.

UNC-Chapel Hill: Honors program; courses for honors students: German 1,2,3,4, and one course in survey.

UNC-Asheville: Literature since World War II, senior thesis.

Wake Forest: Honors.

Catawba: Seminar in German Studies (*Germanistik*).

Although most departments have developed programs in German studies that seem to meet their own needs adequately, the question arises as to whether an individual curriculum is far-reaching enough to satisfy the needs of students in and beyond the local situation. For example, in revising the East Carolina curriculum in 1968, it was our purpose to present a well-balanced and practicable undergraduate curriculum which would be in line with other German programs within the state. However, two serious drawbacks resulted in connection with this revision: (1) the dogged and “administrative” insistence that all 300-level courses carry three quarter hours credit, thereby partially defeating the very purpose of the revision, e.g., Schiller (three quarter hours) at ECU would not be the equivalent of Schiller (three semester hours) at Chapel Hill; (2) lack of direction as regards required courses in literature on the 300 level.

Although this paper does not touch on the requirements within individual departments, it should not be assumed that departments are more or less agreed as to general requirements for a German major. One of the purposes of this paper is to raise the question whether or not some type of standardization should be brought into our undergraduate German curricula. While duplication at the graduate level in North Carolina may or may not be desirable from the point of view of state economy, a certain amount of duplication at the undergraduate level is essential to assure any standards at all.

The Committee on Curricula of the American Association of Teachers of German has fallen on evil days;⁴ therefore, our promised model and experimental curriculum may not be available for some time yet. However, we can begin to face several questions on the local level: (1) Whether a standard curriculum is feasible or desirable for German studies within North Carolina—a curriculum, however, which would likewise allow for flexibility and creativity. (2) The content of German III and IV (Intermediate German I and 2): some general agreement should be reached so that students will have less difficulty in transferring one or both of these courses. (3) General agreement as to approach to German teaching; e.g., what credit, if any, could, say, Pfeiffer College, which adheres to the four skills approach to German, grant to a student transferring from Mars Hill, where German on the elementary and intermediate levels is (according to the catalogue) almost exclusively oral? (See Chart No. 3.) (4) The present policies with regard to freshmen who have had German in high school should also be reviewed, as well as tests and testing methods used to place these students in a college program.

In conclusion, although the German programs offered by colleges and universities in North Carolina are, generally speaking, quite adequate, there seems to be room for improvement in utilizing available resources. Curricula are flexible and most schools are apparently avoiding proliferation of courses. Two major opportunities are, however, being neglected: (1) With one or two exceptions, there are no attempts to make practical use of modern research in linguistics and to offer such a course even as an elective. Structural linguistics, and more specifically transformational-generative linguistics, is already seeping down to the grassroots level in college and grammar school English classes. Yet our present generation of German students is woefully ignorant of any systematic approach to grammar other than the traditional, if that! (2) With the exception of Elon, there is an absence of individualized instruction on the elementary level. Programmed approaches to German have been used at some schools with a great deal of success,⁵ and many feel that this approach to German will soon be much more in demand. While it remains to be seen whether or not this approach can be used creatively *and* within the scope of the humanities, now is the time to experiment.

The questions raised in this article are only a few of the many which need to be thoroughly studied by an authorized committee and eventually brought before a general meeting of the NC-AATG. Perhaps a committee made up of representatives from the fifteen colleges and universities offering a German major might be the logical first stop. If

the predictions prove to be accurate that the 70s will be a decade of crisis in higher education, by acting now we can begin to face these years with some degree of preparation and unity.

¹For a program of this type at Brown University, see William C. Crossgrove and Duncan Smith, "Some Observations and Recommendations on the Teaching of German Civilization Courses," *Unterrichtspraxis*, Vol. IV, No. 1 (Spring 1971), 47-51.

²*Standards and Guidelines for the Approval of Institutions and Programs for Teacher Education*: State Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, N.C., 353 (October 1962), 24-25.

³A preceptorial, as defined in the undergraduate catalogue, is a discussion between instructor and no more than twelve students, an additional and optional unit attached to a regular course, allowing a student to carry his interest and learning in a particular subject further than required in the regular class. If a regular class normally meets three times a week, the preceptorial would be a fourth one-hour meeting.

⁴"... due to lack of funds the project has been suspended and is unfinished." Letter from Klaus A. Mueller, Chairman of the Model Curriculum Task Force, dated 26 July 1971.

⁵William H. Clark and Margaret G. Clark, "Achievement in Elementary German Under Programmed and Conventional Instruction: A Preliminary Study," *MLJ*, L, No. 2 (February 1966), 97-100. See also follow-up in study of the programmed method: William H. Clark and Margaret G. Clark, "First Year College German through Programmed Instruction: Five Years Experience," *Unterrichtspraxis*, Vol. II, No. 2 (Fall 1969), 58-60.